

result of addiction. It is impacting our districts all across America. It is our duty while we are here, as Members of Congress, to do everything in our power to address this now, to turn the tide, to fight back, and to save families that are being torn apart. That is why I support all of these great bills that are moving through the process here in the House.

#### ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 101st anniversary of the Armenian genocide and honor the lives of 1.5 million Armenians who were killed between 1915 and 1923 by the Ottoman Empire. The Republic of Turkey, sadly, continues to try to silence the voices of the survivors and their descendants around the world, but we will never forget nor will we be intimidated into silence.

Several years ago I told the foreign minister of Turkey, who is now the President, that Turkey must recognize the genocide and put this chapter of history to rest. It is extremely frustrating that Turkey continues to ignore what really happened, but in addition to that, it is very disappointing and unacceptable that President Obama failed once again to call the murder of 1.5 million Armenians a genocide—because that is what it was.

Recognizing the Armenian genocide is not something to be debated. The Europe Parliament has gone on record of recognizing the genocide, and last year Pope Francis spoke of the tragedy that took place, the Armenian genocide. Scholars and historians acknowledge that the systematic killings and deportations that took place constituted a genocide.

I, however, simply do not have to rely on the word of historians. Growing up in the San Joaquin Valley in the Fresno area, I heard stories from my friends and neighbors, the Kezerians, the Abrahamians, and the Koligians, whose families experienced the horrors at the hands of the Ottoman Empire.

As we reflect on this day, it is equally fitting to honor the hundreds of thousands of Armenian men and women who bravely began new lives in the United States after witnessing unspeakable tragedies to their families and in their villages. Survivors and their descendants, many of whom settled in California, have become bright examples of what it means to live the American Dream in their own diaspora.

I would like to use this opportunity to tell you of an experience last Friday in Fresno. I had the distinct honor of participating in a wreath-laying event with leaders of the Armenian community and the Armenian National Committee of America, its national chairman, Raffi Hamparian.

I want to take this opportunity to honor someone who brought a sense of

justice to those who perished during that time. We want to recognize a true Armenian hero, Soghomon Tehlirian. As a part of Operation Nemesis, planned by the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, Soghomon Tehlirian assassinated Talaat Pasha, who was the last prime minister of the Ottoman Empire and the orchestrator of the Armenian genocide.

This was an act of justice served on behalf of the Armenian people. Tehlirian was acquitted of the charges by a jury in Germany in the 1920s and later moved to Serbia, and then to San Francisco, California. He died in 1960 and is buried at the Ararat Massis Armenian Cemetery in Fresno, California, which then was the only Armenian cemetery in the country.

I hope my colleagues will join me and the Armenians throughout the Nation and throughout the world in honoring Mr. Tehlirian and to also pay tribute to the 1.5 million lives lost in the genocide—the first genocide in the 20th century—as well as their descendants who live today, for we must never ever forget the history. As Santayana once said: Those who forget history are doomed to repeat it.

#### DENIM DAY

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, on a separate matter, I rise today to recognize Denim Day, which is observed in April throughout the world as being Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

My staff today is wearing denim, joining other organizations throughout the district and throughout the Nation to raise the awareness about sexual violence prevention.

I would like to commend the Valley Crisis Center in Merced, the Madera Community Action Partnership, and the Marjaree Mason Center in Fresno, and the San Joaquin Valley organizations for all that they do to support and serve the victims of sexual assault.

Today, on Denim Day, and every day we stand with the victims and survivors, their families, and their friends to make everyone aware and to prevent the spread of sexual violence.

#### FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PERRY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, this year, job creators should expect significant changes to Federal wage and hour laws, throwing yet one more hurdle in front of them and their employees as the U.S. Department of Labor, the DOL, finalizes new overtime regulations under the Fair Labor Standards Act, or the FLSA.

The basic premise of the FLSA, which applies to many Pennsylvania employers, is that if you are receiving a salary, it must be because your employer is cheating you. The rule that has the force of law discourages salaried employees and discourages the give-and-take between employee and

employer to work for the best interest of each one.

There are limited exceptions to the FLSA's overtime obligations for narrow categories of employees and for those in particular industries and occupations. The most common exemptions are for white-collar employees like executive, administrative, and professional employees.

□ 1030

Currently, an employee must satisfy three criteria to qualify as exempt from Federal overtime pay: first, you must make a salary; second, your salary must be more than \$455 per week, or \$23,660 annually; and third, your primary duties must be consistent with managerial, professional, or administrative positions as defined by the Department of Labor. They don't know every single job in every community across the country, but yet they are the ones that decide, not the people actually doing the work or the ones who started and own the business.

Last year, the DOL proposed arbitrarily increasing the salary threshold to \$50,440 per year, a 113 percent increase, just arbitrarily said that is the way it is going to be. It also proposed automatically increasing the salary threshold on an annual basis regardless of what the economy is. If the economy grew at 4 percent, I guess it would be one thing. If it didn't grow or it grew at 0.3 percent, which is what GDP is currently, it would still go up—again, just arbitrary. This doesn't come from Congress. This isn't bandied back and forth between the Democrats and the Republicans, between the House and the Senate. This is just bureaucrats making a rule, the force of law.

These proposed rules will bring sweeping changes to Federal wage and hour laws, and they will be especially burdensome on rural areas, like central Pennsylvania. They will also significantly impact local governments, nonprofit organizations, and small retailers, among many others.

Because of this rule, for instance, a dry cleaner that I met with recently simply is going to have to make a choice. They are either going to hire fewer people or raise prices for their customers.

I recently met with county commissioners in the district I am privileged to represent. If the requirement is raised, as DOL proposes, 50 county employees will be affected, which will result in either fewer employees or nearly \$400,000 in expenses for the county moving forward. How do you think they are going to offset those costs if they don't lose those employees or fire those employees? You guessed it. You and I are going to pay—the local taxpayers.

I also met with the YWCA in my district, a nonprofit organization. They looked at the potential impact of these regulations and determined that approximately 30 staff members would be affected, resulting in either a loss of

jobs or an additional expense of over \$200,000. For a nonprofit that is struggling to get by, struggling to provide services—whether it is a daycare for underprivileged folks—or just to keep the doors open, they are going to have to make a choice, all because of a rule that didn't come from here. It came from the regulators, as usual, who aren't interested in the input of the Nation's citizens in all too many cases. This is just another example of bureaucrats of the administrative state—in this case, the Department of Labor—developing top-down regulations that crush organizations like nonprofits, small businesses, and communities that can least afford it.

For this reason, I am happy to support a solution. We shouldn't have to provide this solution because this is really a problem that doesn't exist. But there is a solution, the Protecting Workplace Advancement and Opportunity Act, introduced by my colleague from Michigan, Mr. TIM WALBERG, which prevents the DOL from implementing this misguided and completely unnecessary proposal and rule. I strongly urge other Members to support this important legislation as well.

#### VISIT TO GUANTANAMO BAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. CURBELO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week, I visited U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, a critical military national security asset serving key roles in the war on terrorism, drug and migrant interdiction, and as a strategic forward base for the Atlantic Fleet. Every day, approximately 7,000 U.S. military personnel and contractors go to work at GTMO to keep our country safe and to advance our national security interests in the Americas and throughout the world.

I had the privilege of meeting with Captain Culpepper, the base commander, who briefed us on the base's preparedness to assist with major migrant events in the Caribbean. This is important, considering the significant increase in Cubans fleeing the island over the last year.

I also met with Rear Admiral Clarke, who serves as Commander of the Joint Task Force Guantanamo. The JTF is working professionally and diligently to provide safe, humane, legal, and transparent care and custody of detainees. I was able to inspect the detention facilities, and I was impressed with efforts to treat the detainees with dignity and respect.

Our brave young people in uniform do an extraordinary job of representing our country, sometimes under very difficult circumstances, in this theater. Mr. Speaker, the men and women of Naval Air Station Guantanamo, the Joint Task Force, and the Marines who protect the base perimeter deserve the admiration, appreciation, and support of the American people and this Congress.

I thank my colleague from south Florida, ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, for leading our visit to GTMO. I urge all of my colleagues to work to protect and strengthen this critical military asset. ZIKA ERADICATION AND GOOD GOVERNMENT ACT

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, the Zika virus has wreaked havoc throughout Central America, South America, and the Caribbean. We have seen countless pregnant women infected, resulting in devastating fetal brain defects on their newborn children.

As of mid-April, 87 cases of Zika have been identified in Florida, and another 380 cases have been reported across the country. We must be prepared for the first domestic transmission of the virus, especially as the summer mosquito season begins and international travel is more frequent.

For these reasons, I have filed H.R. 5031, the Zika Eradication and Good Government Act. This bill will ensure no new funds are made available for Zika until all unspent Ebola money is disbursed, which the President already said he would do in early April.

This bill will also direct all Federal agencies that receive funds to combat Zika to work in collaboration and share best practice methods.

Finally, this bill will require a report from the President to Congress each month when any future funds are appropriated for Zika, detailing the obligations, expenditures, and effectiveness of the program.

Mr. Speaker, I support the President's call for funding emergency legislation to ensure Zika is eradicated. I also want to make sure the funds are spent wisely and effectively in fighting this virus.

This bill is an important first step forward. I strongly urge my colleagues to cosponsor the Zika Eradication and Good Government Act.

#### CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss the need to improve our prisons and criminal justice system here in the United States.

Currently, there are more than 2 million individuals who are incarcerated in our country, the majority of whom committed nonviolent offenses.

Last December, I had the opportunity to visit with over 20 inmates at Dade Correctional Institution in south Florida. These individuals were visibly moved that someone had taken the time to speak with them and learn about their struggles. I felt very fortunate to have had the opportunity to hear their stories.

Criminal justice reform is desperately needed in our country, and it is vital that we break the school-to-prison pipeline and ensure that those who have served their time have a second chance at success.

For all these reasons, I signed the Second Chance Petition, to allow non-violent offenders to recover with dignity and become active members of their communities.

With this week's Criminal Justice Summit taking place at the White House, I call on all of my colleagues to build on this momentum and meet with inmates to learn from their experiences. I am a cosponsor of bipartisan bills focused on criminal justice reform and look forward to working with my colleagues to get these bills signed into law.

#### HONORING JIM BRADEN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOONEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Jim Braden, pictured here with his granddaughter Cates. Jim is a native of Ripley, West Virginia, who is being honored on April 30 for his significant accomplishments and contributions to the coaching of young men and women for over 52 years in Tennessee and West Virginia.

Jim Braden's roots in Jackson County, West Virginia, baseball began with his father, Ed Braden. Ed Braden was a member of the Sandy Valley baseball club in the 1940s, which received numerous county pennants that earned them the right to play in the Little World Series.

Ed built houses to accommodate the influx of people relocating to work at the new Kaiser Aluminum plant in the 1960s. He also founded Braden Plumbing and Heating in Ripley and was responsible for installing the first bathrooms in many Jackson County homes. Throughout the years, Ed was a staple at Ripley High School baseball and other athletic events.

While at Ripley High School, Jim Braden was in a car accident that cut his baseball career short. Once he recovered from the accident, Jim, still a high school student in Ripley, West Virginia, started coaching youth sports teams.

After a brief period at Glenville State College, Jim Braden proudly served our country for years in the Vietnam war as a part of a U.S. Navy helicopter squadron.

Upon returning to the United States, he took employment as a teacher at Roane-Jackson Technical Center.

Jim moved to Farragut, Tennessee, in 1980, and enjoyed a long career as an industrial sales consultant. But he took his love of baseball and, most notably, his Cincinnati Reds with him, never forgetting his West Virginia roots. His sister, Pam Braden, is on the board of Ripley Convention & Visitors Bureau.

Braden and his wife, Catherine, raised their two children, Laura and Mark, while Braden continued coaching baseball, basketball, and football. In Farragut, Braden was instrumental in organizing and implementing the countywide Knox County Middle Schools baseball league. He created the Dugout Club's Web page and continues